AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An assembly for exchanging retractor support arms within a retractor support clamp, the assembly comprising:

a main body having a surface defining a cavity extending into the main body from a first end and at least one through bore intersecting the cavity;

a pivot ball attached to a second end of the main body wherein the pivot ball engages the retractor support clamp;

a support arm having an end portion having a substantially complimentary configuration to the surface defining the cavity wherein the end portion is positionable within the cavity; and

a retaining mechanism disposed about the main body and in communication with the end portion for retaining the end portion within the main body; and

wherein the retaining mechanism comprises:

at least one spheroidal member positioned within the through bore wherein the spheroidal member has a first portion extending into the cavity and a second portion extending beyond an outer surface of the main body; and

a housing having a through bore wherein the housing is disposed about the main body and moveable thereon wherein an engaging surface which defines a portion of the through bore engages the second portion of the spheroidal member and forces the first portion of the spheroidal member into the end portion when the housing retains the end portion within the main body.

2-3 (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) The assembly of claim ~~3~~1 wherein the engaging surface has a frusto-conical configuration.

5. (Currently Amended) The assembly of claim ~~3~~1 wherein the end portion further comprises an annular groove and wherein the first portion of the spheroidal member is disposed within the annular groove and retains the end portion within the main body when the housing is in the first position.

6. (Original) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the cavity has a substantially non-round first surface.

7. (Original) The assembly of claim 6 wherein the end portion of the retractor support arm has a substantially non-round second surface wherein the second surface engages the first surface to prevent rotation of the end portion of the support arm within the cavity.

8. (Original) The assembly of claim 1 and further comprising a compression spring disposed about the main member and in communication with the retaining mechanism wherein the compression spring biases the retaining mechanism into retaining the end portion.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Presented) A docking apparatus for exchanging retractor support arms within a retractor support apparatus, the docking apparatus comprising:

a main body attached to the retractor support apparatus, the main body comprising an internal cavity;

a support arm having an end comprising a substantially complementary configuration to the internal cavity within the main body wherein the end is positionable within the internal cavity; and

a securing mechanism engaging the end of the support arm and the main body wherein the securing mechanism applies a force to the end of the support arm and the main body to retain the end of the support arm within the main body and wherein the

end has an axis offset from an axis of the support arm such that when the end is positioned within the cavity the offset axis of the end prevents rotational movement of the end within the cavity.

11. (Original) The apparatus of claim 10 wherein the securing mechanism comprises a coiled flexible spring positioned within the internal cavity and wherein when the end is positioned within the internal cavity the coil flexible spring retains the end within the cavity of the main.

12. (Original) The apparatus of claim 10 wherein the end comprises a non-round portion that engages a non-round port of the internal cavity to prevent rotation of the end within the cavity.

13-32 (Cancelled)

33. (Currently Amended) An assembly for exchanging retractor support arms within a retractor support clamp, the assembly comprising:

a main body having a surface defining a cavity extending into the main body from a first end;

a support arm having an end portion having a substantially complimentary configuration to the surface defining the cavity wherein the end portion is positionable within the cavity; and

a retaining mechanism disposed about the main body and in communication with the end portion for retaining the end portion within the main body wherein the retaining mechanism comprises:

at least one spheroidal member positioned within ~~the~~ a through bore wherein the spheroidal member has a first portion extending into the cavity and a second portion extending beyond an outer surface of the main ~~member~~body; and

a housing having a through bore wherein the housing is disposed about the main body and moveable thereon wherein an engaging surface which defines a portion of the

through bore engages the second portion of the spheroidal member and forces the first portion of the spheroidal member into the end portion when the housing retains the end portion within the main body.

34. (Previously Presented) The assembly of claim 33 wherein the engaging surface has a frusto-conical configuration.

35. (Previously Presented) The assembly of claim 33 wherein the end portion further comprises an annular groove and wherein the first portion of the spheroidal member is disposed within the annular groove and retains the end portion within the main body when the housing is in the first position.

36-40 (Cancelled)